

Testimony for Public Hearing
Higher Education Sub-Committee
February 26, 2015
S.B 398
Mariano Cardoso

Good Afternoon Chairwomen Bye and Willis, and distinguished members of the Higher Education Committee, my name is Mariano Cardoso and I am in support of Senate Bill Number 398. The bill provides education equality to many students who are at a disadvantage while pursuing higher education.

Currently, there are many students that have come to the United States, in particular to Connecticut and have graduated from a local high school. Many have achieved this against all odds, some with a great difficulty and barriers such as language, others from harsh urban environments and others living with the difficulty of being undocumented. Once graduated from high school, after so much work and so much effort put in, it all ends there for most students that are undocumented. A dream towards higher education completion gets tougher and barriers get harder to overcome.

With no access to any type of financial support, this means that everything invested by the public school systems or the state into that undocumented student will not truly pay its dividends; the investment would be truly wasted. This, in the long run, is more of a loss than it is beneficial. The opportunity for a student who has lived in the state, which calls home, becomes very difficult to reach their full potential. This, in part inhibits such student from becoming a better contributing member of society. Where he or she can actually get a better job, pay taxes, and really give back to their community.

I myself am undocumented. I am currently working on getting a degree on Civil Engineering at Central Connecticut State University. I have been working night shifts to make sure I can pay for my classes. I have been taken more time than anyone usually would to achieve this. But at my own pace I'll get it. I'm persistent and committed to getting a degree and becoming a professional, and I look forward to giving back to the State of Connecticut, a state that has provided many opportunities to my family.

To conclude, many of us have been brought here at an early age, we seek many of the same dreams and goals as our classmates, they are hard to reach because of economic and financial hardship, financial support for undocumented students is a piece of the formula to help reach those dreams and goals.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my testimony.